

Communications to the Editor

The Question of a Slave Society in North Korea

Yōng-Ho Ch'oe, "Reinterpreting Traditional History in North Korea" (*JAS* 40, 3 [May 1981]: 503–523), in the beginning of his interesting study states: "Ever since Karl Marx attempted to interpret history as a lineal progression through primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist, and socialist stages, Marxist historians have applied this periodic scheme in their studies" (p. 503).

This is, however, not the case. As for the antiquity, Marx to the contrary acknowledged the existence of the antique and Asiatic ways of production, respectively, but did not mention the "slave stage" at all. His ideas on the subject had been developed in the study, "Formen, die der kapitalistischen Produktion vorhergehen," a part of his *Robentwurf* of the Grundrisse der politischen Ökonomie (1939), unfortunately published only in Moscow.

The theory of the slave stage or slave society was developed in the 1930s during extensive discussion before the publication of the *Robentwurf*. This theory has never been fully accepted by the Marxist historians as the protracted discussions on the Asiatic way of production during the 1960s and 1970s in U.S.S.R. and elsewhere showed. For the background and application of the theory of the slave society in China, see, e.g., my study, "Existierte in China eine Sklavenhaltergesellschaft?" published in 1963 in *Archiv orientální* 31: 353–63.

My answer to the question of the existence of the slave society was and remains negative.

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The Segmentation of Monastic Fraternities in Sri Lanka

May I offer a few comments on Steven Kemper's paper, "Reform and Segmentation in Monastic Fraternities in Low Country Sri Lanka" (*JAS* 40, 1 [Nov. 1980]: 27–41), which he has presented as a continuation of, and improvement on, the discussion of segmentation in the first part of my book, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society, 1750–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

Kemper begins his initial references to my work by complimenting me on "a masterful job in discussing the rise of Low Country *nikāyas*" (p. 28); but he soon gives a strange interpretation of that discussion—on which I shall comment later—and ends by making a claim that I had left "the impression . . . that segmentation in the Amarapura fraternity came to an end in 1865" (p. 29). I am baffled by this claim because, in the introduction to my book, I made it clear why I chose to end the discussion of monastic fraternities in 1865, and I noted that the "same discussion could have been continued for the post-1865 period" (p. 7).

Kemper points out that only six of the Amarapura fraternities emerged before 1865, whereas nineteen more have appeared since then; his own aim is to take on all